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REPORT
102-179 Part I

MEMORIAL TO HONOR MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES WHO SERVED IN WORLD WAR II

JULY 31, 1991.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. MONTGOMERY, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany H.R. 1624, which on March 22, 1991, was referred jointly to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and the Committee on House Administration]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 1624) to provide for the establishment of a memorial on Federal land within the District of Columbia to honor members of the Armed Forces who served in World War II, and to express the sense of Congress concerning the United States' participation in that conflict, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon, with amendments, by unanimous voice vote, and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendments (stated in terms of the page and line numbers of the introduced bill) are as follows:

Page 4, line 18, insert ", to the extent provided in advance in appropriation Acts," after "available".

Page 8, line 16, strike out "by reshaping" and insert in lieu thereof "which reshaped".

INTRODUCTION

On April 21, 1988, the Subcommittee on Housing and Memorial Affairs held a hearing on H.R. 3742 (100th Congress), a bill introduced by the Honorable Marcy Kaptur and jointly referred to the Veterans' Affairs Committee and the House Administration Committee. The bill would have established a World War II Memorial and Museum.

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On June 21, 1988, the Subcommittee adopted an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 3742 and recommended that the bill be considered by the full Committee. On June 28, 1988, the full Committee ordered H.R. 3742 favorably reported, as amended and filed a report thereon on July 7, 1988 (House Report 100–755). No action was taken by the Committee on House Administration.

On June 29, 1989, Miss Kaptur introduced H.R. 2807, following the Subcommittee's June 15 hearing on an identical bill, H.R. 537 (101st Congress). This bill was also jointly referred to the Veterans' Affairs Committee and the House Administration Committee. The Subcommittee met on September 12, 1989, and unanimously recommended H.R. 2807 to the full Committee. On September 20, 1989, the full Committee ordered H.R. 2807 favorably reported and filed a report thereon on September 26, 1989 (House Report 101–257). On September 19, 1990, the House Administration Committee ordered H.R. 2807 to be reported. There was no further action on this measure.

On March 22, 1991, Miss Kaptur introduced H.R. 1624, an identical bill. On July 11, 1991, a hearing was held by the Subcommittee. Testimony on the bill was received from Miss Kaptur, the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the American Legion, the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the Disabled American Veterans, the American Ex-Prisoners of War, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The Subcommittee met on July 18, 1991, and unanimously recommended the bill, as amended, to the full Committee. On July 23, 1991, the full Committee ordered H.R. 1624 favorably reported, as amended.

Summary of the Bill

H.R. 1624 directs the American Battle Monuments Commission to establish a memorial on Federal land in the District of Columbia or its environs to honor members of the Armed Forces who served in World War II and to express the sense of Congress encouraging appropriate 50th anniversary commemorations of the United States' participation in World War II.

Discussion of the Bill

During World War II, between the period of December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946, over 16 million Americans served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Of that number, 671,000 were wounded in action; 292,000 were killed in action; and an additional 114,000 died of non-battle causes for a total of 406,000 Americans making the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom around the world. There is currently a memorial to honor Vietnam veterans, and a memorial to recognize Korean Conflict veterans has been initiated, yet there is no single national memorial to pay tribute to World War II veterans. The reported bill would provide for a memorial to honor these Americans.

The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) would be responsible for planning, designing, constructing, and overseeing the operation of the memorial. Accessibility and accommodations for the physically handicapped would be required under the bill.

H.R. 1624 would provide for the establishment of a World War II Memorial Advisory Board consisting of at least nine but not more than 15 members, appointed by the President, serving up to a three-year term. Membership will include a representative of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Museum of American History, as well as World War II veterans, World War II historians, and American historical associations and other organizations knowledgeable about World War II. The Board would be responsible for promoting the establishment of the memorial, encouraging donations of private funds for construction and maintenance, and assisting and cooperating with the ABMC in the selection of the site and design for the memorial. The Board would also transmit an annual report to the Congress concerning the activities and the progress of the memorial.

The bill would authorize ABMC to solicit and accept private contributions for the purpose of establishing the memorial. A special fund would be set up at the Treasury for this purpose. The Secretary of the Treasury would be authorized to invest any portion of the fund that, as determined by the Chairman of the Commission, is not required to meet current expenses. Federal funds would be authorized to be appropriated as necessary, in addition to the private funds solicited by the Commission, for site preparation, design, planning and associated administrative costs, as well as construction, maintenance and operations. It would also allow ABMC to purchase or accept the transfer of any real property in the District of Columbia or its environs for the purpose of establishing the memorial.

The reported bill would also express the sense of the Congress that the 50th anniversary of the United States' entrance into World War II should not go unrecognized at the national level. Therefore, between the years of 1991 and 1995, the Federal Government should encourage appropriate 50th anniversary commemorations of the United States' role in World War II, the contribution to the Allied victory of military men and women as well as ordinary citizens, and the enduring values to which our participation in that struggle was dedicated.

The reported bill would also authorize the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, the Library of Congress, and all executive branch departments, agencies, and establishments of the United States to assist the ABMC in the performance of its functions. H.R. 1624 would encourage the Smithsonian Institution and other Federal museums to develop period exhibits, displays, permanent collections, and other presentations which will honor our World War II veterans, convey a sense of the times, the origins and scope of the war, and the effect of World War II on the world today. The lessons of World War II should be passed on to the generation that will lead us in the 21st Century.

Oversight Findings

No oversight findings have been submitted to the Committee by the Committee on Government Operations.

BUDGET STATEMENT

The following letter was received from the Congressional Budget Office concerning the cost of the reported bill.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
U.S. CONGRESS,
Washington, DC, July 24, 1991.

Hon. G.V. MONTGOMERY,
Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has reviewed H.R. 1624, a bill to provide for the establishment of a memorial to honor members of the Armed Forces who served in World War II. The bill would establish a World War II Memorial Advisory Board, empowered to accept and encourage donations from the public toward the construction of such a memorial, and it would authorize the appropriation of sums necessary for any remaining construction and administrative costs. This bill was ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, July 23, 1991.

The cost of the proposed memorial cannot be estimated until decisions have been made regarding its size, location, and design. Further, there is no way to estimate the amount of money that may be donated by the public toward the establishment of the memorial. If the costs and contributions of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund are any indication, that fund raised $9.3 million in public donations between April 27, 1979 and March 31, 1984 and disbursed $8.3 million over the same period. No federal funds were used to erect the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The costs and contributions to the World War II Veterans Memorial could be quite different, however, from the experience of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Because all spending for this project, from public donations as well as from federal funds, would be subject to appropriation, this bill would not affect direct spending. Therefore, it would have no effect under the pay-as-you-go procedures established by section 252 of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 and would not require a cost estimate under clause 8 of House Rule XXI.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is K. W. Shepherd (226-2820).

Sincerely,

ROBERT D. REISCHAUER,
Director.

INFLATIONARY IMPACT STATEMENT

The enactment of the reported bill would have no inflationary impact.

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